



County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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November 26, 2008

To: Supervisor Yvonne Burke, Chair
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From: William T Fujioka
Chief Executive Officer

Voluntary Sewer Spill Prevention Program – Status Report

During the Board meeting of March 25, 2008, your Board directed the Chief Executive Office (CEO) and the Auditor-Controller (A-C) to work jointly with the Los Angeles County (LAC) Department of Public Health (DPH), Department of Public Works (DPW), the LAC Sanitation Districts, the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works – Bureau of Sanitation and the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) to develop a voluntary sewage spill prevention program.

On September 25, 2008, the above listed agencies met to discuss the implementation status of the State permitting process for collection systems. It is anticipated that the State permitting process will require development of key elements to be implemented by the agencies for improvement of the sewage spill reporting system. Additionally, this permit will mandate specific reporting requirements, requiring all sewage spills to be reported to the RWQCB electronically. Previously, only spills exceeding 1,000 gallons mandated reporting.

Since the A-C's issuance of the January 2007 Sewage Spill Report, it is estimated that the increase in spill reporting to the DPH increased by 2900%, from 26 in 2006 to 773 in 2007. However, DPH reported that a few agencies/cities are still not fully complying with the sewage spill reporting requirements. DPH has made a number of changes in its sewage spill reporting procedures. These changes included: scheduling of meetings with large sewage treatment operators; preparing letters to all 88 cities in Los Angeles County reminding them of their reporting obligations; and assignment of DPH staff to be available to take sewage spill calls.

The group further discussed various strategies which they believe can effectively increase awareness regarding sewage spills. These strategies stress the importance of timely and accurate spill reporting and the necessary measures to reduce and contain spills. As a result, the agencies have agreed to take the following actions:

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective And Caring Service"

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1. DPH is analyzing State sewage spill data acquired since January, 2007, to determine if there are any identifiable patterns, such as repeat offenders, recurring locations, similar causes, or other patterns. Based on the DPH pattern analysis, targeted groups will be identified for outreach and educational campaigns.
2. The A-C will analyze DPH's spill data to determine:
 - number and magnitude of spills
 - cause
 - location
 - increases or decreases in reported spills
 - spills reaching State waters or surface streets

This report will be included as part of the A-C's March 24, 2009 report to your Board.

3. LACSD provided training for the cities in the LACSD service area approximately two years ago in response to State Water Board actions at that time. LACSD continues to answer questions and provide information to those cities. Once DPH has identified repeat offenders, LACSD will assist those who are LACSD clients with additional training.
4. The City Department of Public Works – Bureau of Sanitation, along with LACSD, has developed a training program on sewage spill prevention which has been presented at various industry forums nationally. The Bureau of Sanitation and LACSD are modifying their training presentation program to target those groups identified by the DPH analysis as repeat offenders. It is anticipated that preventative training and reporting classes will be developed specifically for construction contractors and presented at various locations throughout the County.

Please contact Ellen Sandt of this Office at (213) 974-1186 if you have any questions or require further information.

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c: Auditor Controller
City of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works, Bureau of Sanitation
Los Angeles County Department of Public Health
Los Angeles County, Department of Public Works
Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts
Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board